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INFO AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG
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USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO

S E C R E T STATE 368870

LONDON FOR KOLKER

E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR
TAGS: [ANC](#) [SF](#) [PREL](#)
SUBJECT: MEETING WITH ANC LEADER THABO MBEKI

REF: STATE 319466 (NOTAL)

11. SECRET - ENTIRE TEXT.

12. SUMMARY: ANC INTERNATIONAL DEPARTMENT DIRECTOR THABO MBEKI MADE HIS SECOND VISIT TO WASHINGTON IN AS MANY MONTHS NOVEMBER 9 - 14. MIXING CALLS IN WASHINGTON WITH TRAVEL ELSEWHERE (HE ARRIVED IN NEW YORK NOVEMBER 1), MBEKI OFFICIALLY OPENED THE ANC'S WASHINGTON OFFICE WITH A RECEPTION HOSTED BY CONGRESSMAN DELLUMS ON NOV 9 AND HAD MEETINGS AT THE DEPARTMENT ON NOV 13. IN A MEETING WITH ACTING AF ASSISTANT SECRETARY WARREN CLARK, MBEKI SAID THAT THE RECENT RELEASE OF POLITICAL PRISONERS HAS BEGUN A PROCESS THAT IS BOUND TO HAVE AN IMPORTANT IMPACT ON SOUTH AFRICA'S FUTURE. HOWEVER, HE CONTINUED TO ARGUE THAT PRESIDENT DE KLERK DOES NOT DESERVE CREDIT FOR THESE AND OTHER RECENT POSITIVE MOVES. EXPANDING ON REMARKS MADE IN OCTOBER TO AS COHEN (REFTEL), MBEKI ALSO SUGGESTED THE ANC ACCEPTS THE NEED FOR BOTH SIDES TO COMPROMISE ON THE ISSUE OF GROUPS. HE INDICATED, HOWEVER, THAT WHILE COMPROMISE ON CULTURAL/EDUCATION ISSUES MAY BE POSSIBLE (THOUGH DIFFICULT), SCHEMES TO PROTECT WHITE POLITICAL POWER ARE UNACCEPTABLE. END SUMMARY.

LEGALIZING THE ANC

13. HA ASSISTANT SECRETARY SCHIFTER, NSC STAFFER DAVID PASSAGE, S/P STAFFER WALTER KANSTEINER, AF/S DIRECTOR PERITO AND AF/S OIC GALLUCCI ALSO PARTICIPATED IN CLARK'S MEETING WITH MBEKI. MBEKI TOLD THE ASSEMBLY THAT ONE COULD NOT DISMISS RECENT MOVES BY DE KLERK TO FREE POLITICAL PRISONERS AND ALLOW PEACEFUL PROTEST AS SIMPLY COSMETIC. DE KLERK, HE SAID, HAS OBVIOUSLY BEGUN A PROCESS THAT CANNOT BE STOPPED. IT MUST LEAD AT SOME POINT TO LEGALIZATION OF THE ANC. THE RELEASED LEADERS ARE UNDERSTOOD BY EVERYONE TO BE LEADERS OF THE ANC. IN FACT, CONTINUED MBEKI, THE ANC WILL ANNOUNCE SHORTLY THAT THE RELEASED SENIORS ARE PART OF THE OFFICIAL ANC LEADERSHIP AND WILL ACT FOR AND SPEAK FOR THE ORGANIZATION IN SOUTH AFRICA. OTHER POLITICAL PRISONERS LESS PROMINENT BUT ALSO JAILED BECAUSE OF THEIR ANC ACTIVITIES ARE ALSO READY TO PLAY A ROLE. THESE ARE THE INGREDIENTS FOR A SUBSTANTIAL ANC MEMBERSHIP INSIDE SOUTH AFRICA.

14. MBEKI SUGGESTED THAT THIS INTERNAL ANC WILL OPERATE OPENLY AND THAT THE GOVERNMENT WILL THEN HAVE TO LIFT RESTRICTIONS ON THE UDF AND OTHERS. THIS WILL ALLOW THE OPPOSITION TO BEGIN ORGANIZING. THE GOVERNMENT ACCEPTS THAT THIS PROCESS MUST LEAD SOON TO NEGOTIATIONS BECAUSE THE ANC WILL GROW STRONGER AS IT EXPANDS OPEN OPERATIONS. THE SAG ALSO UNDERSTANDS THAT IT CANNOT RELEASE MANDELA UNTIL IT IS READY FOR NEGOTIATIONS.

THEREFORE, ACCORDING TO MBEKI, MANDELA'S RELEASE WILL SIGNAL THAT DE KLERK IS READY.

EVALUATION OF DE KLERK

15. WHILE HE ACCEPTED THAT THIS PROCESS WILL HAVE GREAT IMPORTANCE FOR SOUTH AFRICA, MBEKI REFUSED TO CREDIT DE KLERK WITH GOOD INTENTIONS. REFERRING TO DE KLERK'S MEETING WITH "THE PRIESTS" (TUTU, BOESAK AND CHIKANE), MBEKI SAID THAT IT IS STILL AN EDUCATION PROCESS FOR F.W. WHILE DE KLERK LECTURED THE PRIESTS FOR THE FIRST 30 MINUTES OF THEIR MEETING ON HOW THEY HANDLED THE PRESS, THERE WAS THEN A GOOD DISCUSSION ON WHAT THE SAG MUST DO. MBEKI REMARKED THAT IN THEIR REPORT ON THE MEETING, THE PRIESTS NOTED THAT WHILE THIS DISCUSSION DID NOT APPEAR TO BE NEW GROUND FOR GERRIT VILJOEN, DE KLERK WAS NOT AWARE OF THE ISSUES. MBEKI REPEATED HIS ARGUMENT THAT DE KLERK REMAINS WEDDED TO THE GROUPS CONCEPT AND HAS UNDERTAKEN POSITIVE STEPS ONLY IN RESPONSE TO INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL PRESSURE. (NOTE: THIS WAS THE CLOSEST MBEKI CAME TO DIRECTLY RAISING THE SANCTIONS ISSUE.)

COMPROMISE

16. IN A WIDE-RANGING DISCUSSION ABOUT THE PLACE OF GROUPS IN SOUTH AFRICA, MBEKI NOTED THAT THE POLITICAL STRUGGLE IN SOUTH AFRICA IS REALLY ONE BETWEEN THOSE COMMITTED TO A NON-RACIAL SOUTH AFRICA AND THOSE WHO SEEK THE PROTECTION OF GROUPS. IN THE END, HE SAID, IT WILL COME DOWN TO THESE TWO SIDES FACING EACH OTHER AT THE NEGOTIATING TABLE. BUT MBEKI SAID HE ALSO RECOGNIZED THERE WOULD HAVE TO BE COMPROMISE ON BOTH SIDES. HE VENTURED THAT IT SEEMS NECESSARY TO DEVELOP SOME FORMULA TO GUARANTEE LANGUAGE RIGHTS. BUT THIS WOULD BE DIFFICULT IN PRACTICE SINCE IT WOULD BE UNACCEPTABLE TO MANY TO PRESERVE THE SYSTEM IN WHICH SEPARATE STREAMS OF CHILDREN GO OFF TO THEIR SEPARATE AFRIKANER AND ZULU-LANGUAGE SCHOOLS. THE IDEAL SITUATION, MBEKI CONTINUED, WOULD BE FOR THE SOUTH AFRICAN POPULATION TO MIX. BUT THE RIGHT TO PEOPLE'S OWN CULTURE, LANGUAGE AND RELIGION MUST BE GRANTED. ACCEPTING THIS REALITY IS ONLY THE FIRST STEP. THE HARD PART WOULD BE "CODIFYING" THESE RIGHTS WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF A COMMON SOUTH AFRICA AND WITHOUT RETREATING TO SEPARATE DEVELOPMENT.

17. MBEKI INDICATED THAT POLITICAL COMPROMISE WOULD BE MUCH MORE DIFFICULT. HE REJECTED OUT-OF-HAND AN UPPER HOUSE FOR GROUP REPRESENTATION OR ANY ATTEMPT TO WRITE A "GROUP REPRESENTATION" CONSTITUTION. VIS-A-VIS THE LATTER, MBEKI SPECIFICALLY REJECTED ANY GROUP-BASED FEDERALISM, ARGUING THAT THE ISSUE OF FEDERALISM IN GENERAL IS DIFFICULT BECAUSE IT SUGGESTS IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN CONTEXT THE EMERGENCE OF RACIAL MINI-STATES. HE INDICATED HOWEVER THAT GEOGRAPHICALLY BASED PROVINCES MIGHT MAKE SENSE. ON THE MATTER OF PARLIAMENTARY REPRESENTATION, MBEKI SAID THAT A ZIMBABWE-TYPE SOLUTION OF RESERVED SEATS WOULD NOT BE IDEAL. "OUR WHITE COMPATRIOTS", HE NOTED, SEE THIS AS PUTTING THE WHITES "OUT OF THE LOOP." BUT IN THE END, SUGGESTED MBEKI, THAT MIGHT HAVE TO BE PART OF THE SOLUTION.

HOMELAND LEADERS AND BUTHELEZI

18. IN RESPONSE TO A QUESTION FROM AMBASSADOR SHIFTER, MBEKI REPEATED AGAIN THE NEW ANC HARD LINE ON CHIEF BUTHELEZI. HE SUGGESTED THAT HE WOULD FIND IT EASIER TO SIT AT THE NEGOTIATING TABLE AT THE SIDE OF HOMELAND LEADERS SUCH AS TRANSKEI GENERAL HOLOMISA THAN WITH BUTHELEZI. ACCORDING TO MBEKI, HOLOMISA SHARES THE NON-RACIAL COMMITMENT AND WOULD NOT SEEK TO REPRESENT THE TRANSKEI HOMELAND AT THE NEGOTIATING TABLE. (MBEKI SAID

THAT IN ALL, SIX OF THE 10 HOMELANDS LEADERS ARE IN THE NON-RACIAL CAMP. HE ADDED AT ANOTHER DEPARTMENT MEETING THAT THE ANC BELIEVED IT WOULD BE MORE IMPORTANT TO INCLUDE HOMELAND LEADERS HOLOMISA AND ENOS MABUZA IN THE CONFERENCE ON A DEMOCRATIC FUTURE THAN SMALL BLACK CONSCIOUSNESS AND AFRICANIST GROUPS.) WHILE BUTHELEZI WOULD BE IN PRINCIPLE WELCOME IF HE MADE THE SAME COMMITMENT, AT PRESENT, MBEKI SAID, IT WOULD BE DIFFICULT TO SEE HIM IN THIS LIGHT WHILE HE IS NOT COOPERATING IN EFFORTS TO BRING AN END TO THE VIOLENCE IN NATAL.

CEASE FIRE?

¶9. IN RESPONSE TO A QUESTION, MBEKI SAID THERE HAS BEEN NO ANC DECISION TO DESIST FROM VIOLENCE OR UNDERTAKE A DE FACTO CEASEFIRE. RATHER, THE ANC-MK IS CONCENTRATING ON BUILDING A MILITARY CAPABILITY WITHIN SOUTH AFRICA. THE ANC RECOGNIZES THAT ITS WAR FROM OUTSIDE SOUTH AFRICA HAS BEEN LARGELY INEFFECTIVE. SO IT HAS GONE FROM BOMBING AND HITTING SELECTED TARGETS TO BUILDING A MILITARY MK STRUCTURE INSIDE THE COUNTRY.

ANC/PAC TALKS

¶10. MBEKI DENIED THAT THERE HAVE BEEN ANY ANC/PAC TALKS. HE SAID THAT PAC LEADER JEFF MASEMOLA WAS ADDED TO THE LIST OF ANC RELEASEES AT THE REQUEST OF NELSON MANDELA. MANDELA THEN MET WITH MASEMOLA TO ASK HIM TO BEHAVE PROPERLY UPON HIS RELEASE SO AS NOT TO REFLECT BADLY ON POLITICAL PRISONERS. MBEKI EXPLAINED THAT MASEMOLA HAD FALLEN IN WITH CRIMINAL ELEMENTS WHILE IMPRISONED. (MBEKI TOLD AN EARLIER MEETING THAT THE PAC IS "IRRELEVANT.")

UNGA RESOLUTIONS

¶11. MBEKI NOTED THAT THERE HAS BEEN A GREAT DEAL OF COOPERATION AT THE UN TO TRY TO PRODUCE CONSENSUS ON POSSIBLE RESOLUTIONS. HE ADDED THAT EVERYONE SHARES THE VIEW THAT CONSENSUS AT THE UPCOMING SPECIAL SESSION ON APARTHEID IS NECESSARY. MBEKI ASKED WHAT THE U.S. FINDS INAPPROPRIATE IN THE OAU HARARE DECLARATION. CLARK RESPONDED THAT WE CANNOT ACCEPT THE REFERENCES TO AN INTERIM GOVERNMENT OR LANGUAGE SUGGESTING THE ANC IS THE SOLE LEGITIMATE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN PEOPLE. CALLS FOR SANCTIONS ARE ALSO UNACCEPTABLE. MBEKI SAID THAT SANCTIONS NEED NOT BE MENTIONED IN THE SPECIAL SESSION DECLARATION. HE ALSO THOUGHT IT POSSIBLE TO DEAL WITH HOW TO REFER TO THE ARMED STRUGGLE AND TO ADDRESS THE INTERIM GOVERNMENT POINT WITHOUT USING THAT PARTICULAR PHRASE. AT THE LEAST, MBEKI CONTINUED, WE COULD AGREE ON WHAT ELEMENTS ARE IN THE "SPIRIT OF HARARE" AND WHAT IS NOT. HE NOTED THAT MANY OF THE ELEMENTS IN THE ANC-DRAFTED DOCUMENT WERE INTENTIONALLY DRAWN FROM SECRETARY SHULTZ'S 1987 SPEECH ON SOUTH AFRICA AND BRITISH FOREIGN MINISTER HOWE'S 1988 EFFORT. THE ANC WAS TRYING TO ADDRESS THE REQUEST TO DEFINE BETTER WHAT IT IS FOR. PERITO REPLIED THAT THESE ARE THE ELEMENTS WE FOUND POSITIVE AND THE REASON WE SAID SO PUBLICLY. BUT HE EMPHASIZED THAT WE COULD NOT ACCEPT ANYTHING SMACKING OF A 435-LIKE EFFORT OR FULL OF PRECONDITIONS. MBEKI INVITED FURTHER DISCUSSION OF THESE POINTS, PERHAPS IN LUSAKA.

BAKER